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A Picture Gallery of Souls

Ira S. Stern



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PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

SONNETS AND SHORT POEMS

BY

IRA I. STERNER

Author of "A Souvenir Essay on Seeming and Being," "Songs of the Prima Donna," etc.

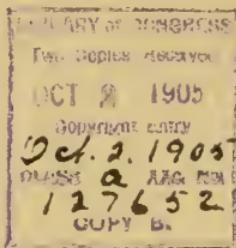


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THE AUTHOR'S PREFACE

Although I'm fallible like you,
Whate'er ye seek, I seek the true;
So if ye any errors find,
Those errors are of human kind.

By patient study of my art,
I secrets learn from many a heart:
I analyze each human soul,
And paint its features on my scroll.

The truth, however dark or bright,
Must be within a prophet's sight:
The dark is Satan's bad alloy;
The bright is God's eternal joy.

If ye can find a noble line,
Expressing feelings half divine,
Know ye that I must tune the lyre
To notes that other souls inspire;
Where'er ye find the grandest words,
A higher power touch'd the chords:
I dedicate my poetry
To cosmo-psychic Energy.

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INTRODUCTION TO THE PUBLIC

Time's wheel has also turn'd to me:
Shall I a prudent poet be?

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

A SALUTATORY POEM

Jubeo Vos Salvere.

Oft have ye read the lives of poets past,
Deplored their sorrows and absorb'd their joy;
At times ye found a sage of Titan cast,
For whom all human life was but a toy:
For them who shun the cause of human woes—
Inspired by noble thoughts, life grandly flows.

Some live more deeply than their fellow-men,
And see the truths conceal'd beyond your ken:
They feel intensely what a man must *be*,
To stay unharmed on life's tempestuous sea;
They leave the small, and to the greater cling:
Their spirits into loftier air they bring,
That they far holier songs may feel and sing.

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

The roof of every human home,
Magnificent celestial dome,
Was made for both the great and small;
The blessings of the perfect light
Were made for strong and faint eye-sight,
And Nature's scenes are free to all.

Our world is beautified with splendid views,
Some painted wondrously: shall we refuse
To look that we may see?
And all the harmony of life is here,
If we discover that all life is dear,
With an eternal key.

To sleep aspire we?
To idle nullity?
Is such our life, our gift, our only care?
Care you naught for human needs?
Strive you not for worthy deeds?
Put on the arms that conq'ring heroes wear.

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

If sincerity be nil,
If life be a tangled maze,—
Then exert thy innate will,
And transform the gloomy haze;
Though the weak choose slavery,
Poet, thou at least, be free.

Man's highest criticism of boundless things
Is far beneath th' Omniscient's ponderings:
As th' endless universe exceeds our earth,
So God transcends the highest human worth.

DEUS jubet nos salvere.

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

THE DEVELOPMENT OF INDIVIDUALITY

A gardener planted seeds
Of immortality,
And water'd them with tears;
Ere long some ugly weeds
Sprang up abundantly,
And fill'd his heart with fears.

Storms of malevolence,
Blown o'er the water-springs,
Dried them away;
But soon the fog was dense;
Moist were the fosterlings:
Sprouting they lay.

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

Warm was the precious dew,
Falling through wholesome air—
Nourishing life;
Sprouting germs conscious grew,
Spreading their rootlets bare—
Arming for strife.

While tender leaves unfurl'd,
Small were the fosterlings,
Waiting to grow;
Great was the heedless world,
Scorning the little things—
Caring for show.

Down stream'd the sunshine mild,
Blessing each tender herb:
Ever they grew;
Soon pretty raylets smiled
Through sparkling gems superb,
Gems of the dew.

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

Many a cloudy day
Hid half the light away,
Darkening their life;
Many a stormy wave
Threaten'd a watery grave—
Doubling the strife.

But naught can hinder bloom,
Or stay the little fruits
While they expand;
Slowly the plants take room,
Spreading their strong deep roots
All through the land.

At length the fruits are ripe,—
The viands of the great
While time shall last:
From an eternal type
These fruits of later date
Came, like the past.

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

AN ALLEGORY OF EXPERIENCE

I.

Some years ago began a human dream
Of waking life, that floated o'er the stream
Of time,—from little rivulets and springs,
And youthful scenes of fascinating things.

The dream progress'd upon a wider brook
Within a neighborhood of cheery look;
And life proceeded happily among
The beams of beauty and the chords of song.

Then visions of each lovely day gone by
Predicted that still fairer days were nigh;
And while the merry birds were singing lays,
The dream was sweeten'd by the notes of praise.

The brook expanded to a river wide,
And all the scenes and sounds were magnified;
The breeze was peaceful as the gentlest gale;
The stream flow'd smooth'y through a blooming
vale.

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

2.

'Twas torrid summer, and the solar heat
Began to leave the landscape parch'd and dry ;
Ere long amassing vapors, like a fleet,
Were sailing swiftly through the brilliant sky.

The darkening clouds grew hostile in their flight
And threaten'd gravest ruin in the gloom :
The lightning-flashes dazed the strongest sight,
And thunder echo'd more than cannon's boom.

Then copious showers swell'd the stream of life
To waters rushing on with might and main,
Invading quiet dales with fearful strife
And devastating all the beauteous plain ;

Accumulating billows on the way,
And sweeping forth the mass of torn débris,
And lashing cumbrous waves in foaming fray,
The mighty torrent swept into the sea.

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

3.

The flaming sun dispell'd th' impending gloom
And lighted up the scenes of threaten'd doom;
The sky was all resplendent with the rays,
Chromatic like the rainbow's fairest phase.

Behold! a gentle stream was flowing still
Serenely onward like a pretty rill;

Then mingled with the murmur of the trees,
There was a music in the swaying breeze:
The air was fill'd with harmonies of song
That urged my weary life to move along.

I look'd above the stream with eager stare,
And saw celestial swans ascending there:
The swans were singing as they soar'd above,
And fill'd the sky with symphonies of love;
Beholding them, my soul enlarged with glee,
Because they sang from heaven, O follow me!

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

SINNERS AND SOCIETY

"Come over into Macedonia, and help us."
Acts 16:9.

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

A BEREAVED MATRON

"My babe is dead; how can I let it go?
My own blood has been given, all in vain,
For life that is but death: a cruel foe
Has slain my joy. My heart is fill'd with pain,—
A wrenching of the stimulated nerves,
And wretched ignorance of life's best plan;
To shed my life in tears but poorly serves
To show the folly of the works of man."

Hush! art thou right, or she who proudly spurns
Participation in perpetual race?
She, too, is blind until she wisely learns
That birth and death have no abiding place;
Accurst be marriage if it mar the souls:
No blotted names are writ on Heavenly rolls.

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

THE BUGLE CALL TO THE SLUMS

O you whose hearts are pain'd by cursed words,—
Proclaiming that those evil thoughts are right
Whose false vibrations move through space in
flight

Irrevocable, like malignant birds
On fatal mission preying on whole herds
Of tender sucklings slain, and e'er alight
On victims not discerning day from night,—
Now grasp the sword that shatters Error's
sherds.

Though harm'd ere birth, though heirs to ills un-
told,
Though rear'd in breeding-nests of fiendish
woes,—
March forth with strong determination bold
To smite all evil with destructive blows:
Let ne'er your fiery martial zeal grow cold,
But triumph o'er the army of man's foes.

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

SLAVES OF ALCOHOL

The billows of life are a snare:
Both blessings and curses they bear,
Up-raisèd or sunk by a breath ;
The treacherous shoals in the light
Reflect a mirage, falsely bright,
That lures to the fatal rest, Death.

Let fateful, grim Melpomene
Describe the slaves of tragedy.—

Breaths of the universe,
Floating on life's deep sea,
Drifting through time in a frail carnal boat:
After the drowning curse,
Vain was the bended knee:
Lost is the hope of the doom'd on the float.

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

O hideous deformity,—
The beastly mark, impress'd on man !
O sin's accurst enormity,
That hinders every noble plan !

Whene'er the spirit craves the sky,
Down pulls the morbid body's weight :
How can aspiring wretches fly,
So cumber'd by their sinful state ?

O Pain ! the sting of duties unfulfill'd,
The remonstrating voice of broken laws,
The purgatory of the selfish-will'd,
And nature's lash for uncorrected flaws :
Woe be to ignorance untaught by pain ;
For dangers follow warnings sent in vain.

No words, though dark as blackest night,
Can utter all the pain and blight :
As tortured victims writhe and plead
On racks, their wounded feelings bleed ;
So they must suffer on and groan,
Until the wailing winds shall moan.

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

Tost by fears and visions dire,—
Darkest ocean and the mire
Over the wrecks shall fearlessly roll;
Half in waves and half in fire,
Onward drifts the human pyre:
Out burns the life, and on floats the soul.

In long continued blaze of sin they turn'd to dust;
No angel came to purge out sin's consuming rust.

Move on, Hope's fools! The gloom of earth
needs you no more:
Time's fools, move on! approach the gloomy
Stygian shore.

Deceptive transient pleasures fill'd their life with
woes;
Eternal pain awaits them in Gehennal throes.

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

A DRUNKARD'S EPITAPH

Strong words, from which faint hearts would
turn with dread,
To speak of life that words cannot express,—
Be silent: for how utterly distress
Forbids vain man to say what can't be said!

Then silence! Better imitate the mutes,
Than writhe on life's perpetual trial-rack
To find some spot of soundness yet to crack
With fiery draughts transforming men to brutes.

His world had swoon'd; or else the great machine
Of worldly deeds was running everywhere
Yet nowhere: still the wheels with buzz and hum
Were circling dizzily, almost unseen
By weary eyes, unheard by dull-ear'd care:
Then Silence! *words can't skim life's stagnant
scum.*

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

BE YE MERCIFUL.

What carest thou that others fear and sigh?
What carest thou that others mourn and die?
What carest thou that others live in gloom,
And lose their hope within the silent tomb?

Why cared ye naught when sinners died in sin?
Had ye supplied their need, they might have
been.

“Inasmuch as ye helped not the least of these
needy ones, depart from Me into condemnation.”
—Matt. 25:41-46.

Adversity, be thou benign:
Teach us to love and to forgive,—
That we from all defects refine
Our heart-strings, tuned with those that *live.*

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

DIRGE FOR THE FRIENDLESS

Come, populace, attend their funeral;
And all ye heartless, bear them to the grave;
When life in danger was, none heard their call
And none reach'd forth a helping hand to save;

For great this mighty world is, but unkind:
Each man a selfish course alone doth run;
So friendless souls no refuge ever find
In helpful arms that bless *ere* life is done.

Now when the spirit out of them has fled,
And sorrows, hopes and fears have all gone by,—
Recite your vain eulogium for the dead,
And raise your cruel thoughts into the sky;

These strangers creep into the silent dust,
Demanding justice: may the heavens be just.

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

SELFISHNESS

At first there is a half-protected spark
Of gentle sympathy with human life,
And kind approval easing noble strife;
But presently its light grows slowly dark:

And then the darkness hastens down the hill
Of pride, from heights of glorious vanity
To dwell in scornful dales unhappily,
While no one's need disturbs the selfish will.

Then only self exists: for self the world
Was made; for self alone, exists the pow'r
To hear and see; for self this orb is whirl'd
Through space; but self must meet a fatal hour.

May God root out our selfishness and pride,
And teach us that the kind and meek abide.

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

THE HISTORY OF A CRIMINAL

The child yearns deeply for a mother's love :
It cannot know the way
Through this great wonder-world, unless that
 love
Will brighten every day.

The orphan moans : "Had I a mother's love,
My doubtful steps would not go far astray :
Her love would shield me and keep harm away."

The prisoner groans : "I had a mother's love ;
But me the knaves to gilded follies led,
And gave me serpents' meat and stones for
 bread."

The wanderer sighs : "I had a mother's love ;
But who can see his blessings when they're near ?
Now every hand is hidden in a glove,
With naught but scorn to greet a soul so drear."

Faint prayers arise : "Give me a mother's love :
The wheel of time turns to a child again ;
Soon change must come that I may rise above
My worn-out self : smooth Thou my way. Amen."

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

REPENT.

O mortal, so restless! no ease
Can come from a passive, weak will;
Though luring temptations may please,
To ruin and death they lead still.

O scornèd! there are some who love;
And friendless! there are some who weep;
While sinners in darkness may rove,
The Eyes all-beholding ne'er sleep.

Resist sin with resolute strife;
Root out the temptations within;
Hold fast to a strong, useful life;
O mortals, be pure, and hate sin!

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

AN APPEAL FROM THE CLOISTER.

How dare it be that my weak life should close,
With hopeless death a justly earnèd fee?
How often I have will'd to follow Thee,
But sinn'd again, no fellow-mortal knows;
O God, Confessor of my hidden woes,
Canst Thou in pity listen to my plea?
Canst Thou forgive my sin and misery,
And free me from the curse of inner foes?

How oft my strongest pleadings have been vain,
When follow'd by the sins before confess!
No spotted souls shall enter Thy domain,
To gloom the happiness of spirits blest;
When shall Thy holy will within me reign,
And give me power to realize the best?

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

THE TEACHER'S ORACLE

O teacher ! alchemist of living souls
Still undevelop'd, needing guiding hands
To keep them out of life-consuming brands,—
Make thou a genuine product : in thy bowls
Pour love and wisdom, undefiled with sands
From painted ruins or from hidden shoals ;
Direct sweet incense toward heaven-high goals
Consistent with eternal Truth's demands :—

That each enlighten'd soul forewarnèd flees
All ill, and e'er avoids each sinful snare ;
And that they use perfection's golden keys
Which God entrusted to their present care :
With zeal they shall reject all transient ease
For Him, Rejector of each selfish heir.

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

LIFE REDUCED TO ITS ELEMENTS

Helplessly, weakly, one by one:
So is human life begun;
But woe to him who does not live the right!
Lovingly, dearly, two by two:
Transient joys and sorrows woo;
But woe to them whose souls are lost in night!
Silently, singly, one, two, three:
Leaves fall from Ygdrasil-tree;
But woe to us who let them suffer blight!

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

SORROW AND JOY

In gloomy days and darkest night,
The sun still has his brilliant light.

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

LIFE: APPARENT AND REAL

“Why do we sigh and long and toil in vain?
Why do we struggle to prolong a life
That is compell’d to end? What is our gain?
When sleep steals o’er us, then will end the
strife:
The world goes on as if we had not been;
Though we are gone, the careless world’s no less,
And all our work and love and hope and sin
Have vanish’d into final nothingness.”

But no, not vain! Th’ Eternal will repay
Thee for endeavors true, and weary toil:
He will not let forever dark dismay
Conceal thy vital hopes within the soil;
For when the Sun of Life destroys the night,
Thy open’d eyes shall see the perfect Light.

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

PESSIMISM AND OPTIMISM

"When thy beloved suffers, what care I?
The treach'rous Sun can make love's summer
cold
By hiding his caloric rays of gold;
All mortal flesh was only born to die:
Though Chronos rear his children, soon they're
old;
If now they boldly dare to soar on high,
Their fall will be much farther from the sky,
And their reward is only moss and mould."

'Tis false! Let heroes' lives be all employ'd
In deeds that brighten every human theme;
When selfishness and scorn have been destroy'd,
The brotherhood of man shall reign supreme:
Then peace and charity shall be enjoy'd
As milk and honey from the Heavenly Stream.

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

SYMPATHY FOR INVALIDS

Strong were the weak; the sad were bright and gay:

There was a fair springtime when merry play
And happy voices fill'd young hearts with bliss,
Not knowing of a better world than this;
But autumn comes, and every leaf must fade:
Frost chills the robust man and rosy maid
And nimble boy: the drooping of the bloom
Foreshadows all the blight of mortal doom.

Can vanish'd health and happiness be found?
What balm can soothe and heal a painful wound?
What remedy can cool a fever'd brow
And build anew the vigor broken now?
What tonic can relieve the weakling's woe
And warm the pallid cheeks to ruddy glow?
What power can arouse the feeble breath
And turn away the threatening hand of death?

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

O vanish'd joys of former healthful days,
And vanish'd traces of a happy gaze,—
Where are ye now, when vital forces wane
And gloomy change has fill'd a life with pain?
Who cares that mortals mourn and fear and sigh,
And wither slowly as the days go by?
What pity can illume the downward slope?
What words of cheer can raise the smitten hope?

Come, Charity, dispel the clouds of gloom
Ere hope be lost within the silent tomb;
Do all thou canst to comfort, cheer, and heal;
For needy souls, in fervent prayer kneel.
Devote thy life to succor ill mankind:
By faithful earnest service, thou shalt find
Sweet joy and peace and love eternally:
For Heaven is thy reward, dear Charity.

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

A GIRL'S HOPELESS AFFECTION

O the dreadful pain of a hope that is slain,
For all the coming years!

O the wretched gain of a love that is vain,
While sighs conceal the tears!

O the pangs of a heart that must e'er dwell
apart

From the only cheer on earth!

O the grievous smart of the cruel dart
That pierces the source of mirth!

Must my love e'er dine on the bitterest brine,
Till my starving heart grows cold?

Must my light decline, when true lovers shine
With a beauty sweet to behold?

O the gentle rain on the verdant plain,
For the happy and the blest!

O the gloomy train and the sad refrain
That will follow my love to rest!

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

TWO LIVES UNITED

The highest earthly creatures have two views
Of one great, azure-vaulted picture-world :
The virile view has scenes of toil unfurl'd,
Of strife with elements too strong to use
Untamed, which, master'd, yield their magic
pow'r
To help man build his chosen destiny ;
The gentle view is full of charity,
Forgiveness, soul-relief, kind deeds each hour.

Rough were the toilsome pilgrimage of man
If woman's kindness did not smooth the way :
Two lonely views of life are each half true :
The whole truth joins the two whene'er it can ;
So human life shall see the truth each day,
Till youths immortal see the perfect view.

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

MATRI SANCTAE MORITURAE

O holy mother ! In thy soothing arms
A weary child would find enduring rest,
But cannot : e'en thy dearest, gentlest breast,—
So full of kindest mercy, purest charms,
And all-forgiving love that ever warms
Thy heart with joy, because the transient guest
Shall have a home among immortals blest,—
To dust shall crumble from Time's fatal harms.

In thee a wondrous power draws, to bind
My life to thine ; yet soon the human door
To soul is closed between : I cannot find
Thy spirit's dwelling-place, until I soar
To regions kindling vision in the blind,
Where I can see thy charms for evermore.

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

TRUE LOVE OUTLIVES LIFE

Love ye the little child: it cannot rove,
A helpless stranger, in the world alone.
Love ye the merry boy: the life that strove
To grow, must well be moulded ere 'tis grown.
Love ye the modest youth: life must be wove
From useful threads, and virtue must be sown.
Love ye the blooming forms: the light above
Transfigures them who seek Him whence it
shone.
Love ye the man mature: what can atone
For errors, and the present best improve?
Love ye the patriarch: the time has flown,
And crumbling energies refuse to move.
Love ye the vanishèd: a corpse is gone,
But that belovèd soul fore'er lives on.

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

LIFE AND DEATH

Young leaves sprout on Ygdrasil-tree,
And soon they fade from memory:
What if a rose-bud opens fair,
And with its beauty eases care?
'Tis but a phantom soon unseen;
The buds may fall in world-storms keen.

Ygdrasil shuns mortality,
And tries to live perpetually:
Though all the leaves must change their hue
And fade and flutter through the breeze,—
They reach the earth from which they grew,
And feed again the life of trees.

There is no flower that blooms, but fades:
So bloom'd ye all, immortal shades;
So shall ye bloom, posterity—
And fading, find all verity.

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

AN ORPHAN'S RENUNCIATION

Mine eyes were red with weeping ;
My heart was weary and sore :
Comfort I sought, but found none,—
No, none in this world evermore.

But I fled to the Infinite Father,
And He welcomed my bitter despair ;
Myself I pour'd out, and confided
My woes to th' All-Good and All-Fair :—

“O God ! give me peace, lest I perish ;
None else can my restlessness calm :
O Thou Infinite, All-Satisfying !
Soothe me with Thy perfect balm.

Fatherless, motherless, sisterless, brotherless,
Desolate is the world ever to me :
Lord, in Thy mercy remember mine orphanage ;
Guardian, Protector, my soul trusts in Thee.”

Renuntio, renuntio delicias mundi ;
Accipio, accipio laetitias coeli :
Christi virgo, laete cano
Sempiternum Praeclaro.

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

THE GENIUS OF A LYRIST

Ambrosial food of pictured sympathies
Was gently melted on a lyrist's lip,—
That all his words in sensuousness could dip
To sing delicious, beauteous melodies :

So was he bless'd with lovely qualities ;
Olympic gods no sweeter nectar sip,
Nor Eros joining hearts on Hymen's trip,
Than he, array'd 'neath floral canopies.

So e'er his songs were fill'd with fairest things
That never can be moved by Fortune's gust :
All building-stones must moulder ; Ruin flings
All cherish'd vanities on heaps of rust ;
But songs of Beauty still endure when kings
And palaces have crumbled into dust.

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

SEEKING HAPPINESS IN VAIN

E'er happiness eludes the wills untaught:
Now find it in thyself if none is there;
Or beg it of a mortal, sweetly fair,
Who cannot give what she has vainly sought;
With all thy gold compel it to be bought;
Pursue it in the proud palatial glare,
In royal luxuries and treasures rare,
Or glory of stupendous actions wrought.

A multitude of eager pilgrims filed
To fair mirages,—thirst intense to cloy;
But there they only found a dismal wild
Where famine's pangs the wanderer destroy:
The pilgrims perish'd soon, because beguiled
By gleams disguising death in promised joy.

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

FROM PURGATORY UPWARD

If Dante was in regions of the lost,
So I; and though in purgatory still,—
My frailty by so many tempests tost,—
I gaze at that remote celestial hill.

Ere long the rays shall dry the sinful bog
That clogs my course to better worlds above;
Ere long the stronger light dispels the fog
That hides from me my cherish'd Home of Love.

Soon shall my guiding star in splendor grow,
To promise nearer aspect of the Goal;
Then upward till I see the triune Bow,—
Th' Inspirer, Savior, Author of my soul!

So let me rise above th' encumbering sod,
Until I find my happiness in God.

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

HUMAN NEEDS SUPPLIED

What we blindly seek to see,
What we weakly strive to be,
What the heart needs for a fee,—
These exist eternally.

While the soul demands a key
To the hidden mystery
And the final vast decree,—
God discerns all verity.

While I bend th' adoring knee,
Thou Omniscient, hear my plea:
Bid the wily tempter flee;
From all evil set me free.

While I cross this stormy sea
To that everblooming Lea,—
Potent Pilot, strengthen me:
Anchor fast my soul on Thee.

Spirit, make me e'er agree
With celestial harmony
And the pure seraphic glee,—
Till my joy is found in Thee.

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

TUA GUIDA BEATRICE

Thy guide e'er beams with heavenly radiance,
And her dear heart is gloriously pure;
Behold her royal gracefulness advance:
For only she thy misery can cure.

Angelic dignity in human frame,
She bids thee to perfect thy mortal life:
For her dear sake thou leavest love of fame,
To overcome all sin with hallow'd strife.

Her words divine, in tones so beautiful,
Enchant thy soul with visions of the skies;
Her voice declares all worldly honors null,
And bids thee to immortal regions rise.

To me her sacred love and wisdom show,
That I may build an Eden here below.

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

TRANSCENDENT CHARITY.

Ye incarnations of the thoughts benign,
Are dearer far than mortal tongues can tell:
No human soul within a finite shell,
Can speak th' infinity of Love divine.

The highest human love is but a sign
Of higher Love where all immortals dwell;
So let the harmony of life now swell
In worthy branches of th' eternal Vine.

Now in our charity may life arise
From gentleness to ever kinder deeds,
And may the sacredness of friendly ties
Urge us to give our best to human needs;
In triumphs of Good Will let us be wise,
That we may follow where the Conqueror leads.

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

ETERNAL FRIENDSHIP.

We should acquire the sympathies of soul
Superior to circumstance and time:
More deep than life and death, in tuneful rhyme
Let minds accord, whatever seasons roll.

Howe'er remote may be our highest goal,
Rejoice with me: the bells of earth can chime
Sweet echoes of the harmonies sublime,
That come to us from Heaven's most charming
knoll.

Let energies divine our souls e'er blend
In brotherhood more close than clasping glove;
Let common hope of Home our courses bend
Together toward Paradise above;
With joy serene we then shall greet each friend:
I love thee with an everlasting Love.

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

LESSONS FROM HISTORY

History presents temerities:
Face them: find their hidden verities.

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

THE EMPERORS ENSLAVED BY SIN

They who—with reason born divine to sway
The world, and royal palaces to fill
With glorious rays to brighten this world's day—
Suppress that reason and betray their will
To inner tyrants on destruction bent,—
Intolerable yokes shall bear and must
Thenceforth to hideous slavery consent,
Till royalty be hid beneath the dust.

O slaves of vice ! why should your lives have been
Destruction-doom'd e'en from your natal rooms ?
Scorch'd by the cursed lightning-blasts of sin,
Ye slept so early in such hopeless tombs ;
Though God's own trumpets thunder'd forth, Be
strong,
Ye wrought your doom by loving fatal wrong.

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

SOLILOQUY OF A MEDIAEVAL MONK

Now mendicant and friar, monk and priest,—
With hoods, bells, censers, garbs, and strings of
beads,—

Approach the Roman altars for a feast
Of wine, to quench remorse for sinful deeds:

Now all their souls are full of pride and hate
And selfish ease; they gather all the wealth
Of sinners, widows, orphans,—with the bait
Of dear indulgence, pardons, mass, or stealth.

If this be true religion,—verily
A hybrid of good words and heathen acts,
Abominations and idolatry,—
Remove it far from me and give me facts:

O that there were a tangible Divine,
That I might worship at a living shrine!

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

THE ASTROLOGER'S PREDICTION

(Nov. 4, 1900.)

" 'Tis near Election-Day ; this Sunday morn,
The horoscopic portents are proclaim'd ;
The nation's Candidates, who twice were famed
For high attainment, both had been high-born ;

The one's great, brilliant energies can not
Persuade the Fates to give the Chair to him ;
The re-elected one has righteous vim
That brings success and friendship ne'er forgot :

This noble Chief, believing all are good,
May be deceived ; he does not heed the call,
'Beware of foes' ; his danger is outside :
A hypocrite may come in friendly hood ;
McKinley's life will not outlast next fall ;
Then Roosevelt shall the great republic guide."

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

AMICICIDIUM PRINCIPIS (*Sept. 6, 1901.*)

The hand of destiny, now fair, now foul,
Blots even our new scroll of Christian time:
Though volume twenty seeks harmonious rhyme,
Its preface gives a Tartarean howl.

From cells Gehennal came the dire advice
To slay the unimpeachable, because
A prince controls himself with righteous laws
While lawless men cast their perdition-dice.

So was it e'er since human time began:
The prophets slain by those they taught to climb;
Philanthropists in poverty alone,
And benefactors curst by succor'd man;
So was it in the Tragedy Sublime
When Christ was martyr'd though His deeds
were known.

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

THE MYSTERY OF GOOD AND EVIL

Back from the hearth and paradise below,
Back to the charming Sirens' slaughter-pen;
Back from the gorgeous domicile of woe,
Back to the fold and righteousness again!

So in the round of human ill and weal,
Each alternation rings through history:
When Time unlocks its final wisdom-seal,
The wise shall understand the mystery.

Then every selfish soul that fosters ill,
Is self-exiled from God's eternal throne;
And every docile soul that does His will,
Shall rise to Him by whom the soul is known.

So fools awake in exile, when too late;
And wise aspirers enter Heaven's gate.

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

A SONG OF THE DEAD

When mortals shall sleep in the last narrow bed
Where the tomb closes o'er earthly dreams,
Then mortals shall know,—some with joy, some
with dread,—
That this life is far more than it seems.

When minglings of darkness and light all are
o'er,
And the conflicts of hope and despair,—
Then mortals shall look on eternity's shore
To see their own destiny there.

No more shall the shouts of the warrior be heard
When the din of the conflict is past:
Then silence shall reign o'er the grave of each
word,
And the triumph of silence shall last.

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

When the cycles of time shall have fled with dis-
may

From the scenes of rebellion and woe,
The records of action shall open that day
To judge human deeds here below :

The haughty and proud shall be conquer'd by
dust,

And the hateful consumed by their hate ;
The sensual shall burn in the rays of the just,
And the slothful shall mourn over fate.

The lowly and meek shall be crown'd on a throne,
When the thorns are removed and the gall ;
The loving and upright shall ne'er be alone,
In the friendship of Him who loves all ;

In concord and peace these will joyfully sing :—
How worthy the Lamb that was slain !
All honor and glory and praise to our King
Who freed us from sin and from pain.

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

DEATH

They who must leave this finite realm of sense,
Had time enough to fill their lamps with oil:
E'en though they're unprepared for that suspense,
Then dark mortality they cannot foil.

Grieve not that worn-out shells no souls can keep,
Nor that there is an end to human strife;
But rather o'er your follies gladly weep,
That grief may purge your souls for higher life.

Great equalizer of the rights of man,
Allegiance-bond of serf and potentate,—
Death nullifies the tyrant's jealous ban,
And mingles common clay with ashes great:

This squares accounts with man's reality,
Till death be overwhelm'd in victory.

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

THE WAVE OF TIME

Roll on, thou rugged Wave of finite Time,
From vanish'd fogs to endless shores at last:
Bear lasting freight through all thy wreckful
vast,
From troughs abysmal to the height sublime.

Let bells aboard their joy and sorrow chime.
'Mid echoes of the martial trumpet-blast,
The cheers and moans and curses of the Past,—
Until their sound be hush'd in calmer clime.

Bear all the riches of th' eternal Guild
Away from shoals and whirlpools to the Shore,—
Till righteous peace thy motions shall have
still'd,
To make serene thy rolling evermore:
Then on thy calm, Eternity shall build
The throne of Him whom countless worlds adore.

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

WAR

The Benefactor of man's destiny
Commands, "Love thou thy neighbor as thyself":
So were equality, fraternity
And peace, in fundamental doctrine taught;
While centuries elapsed, some heroes, strong
By faith, did imitate their Exemplar
And truly loved mankind more than themselves:
As long as human history goes on,
The names of Truth's great servants shall be
fresh
In memory, to kindle human zeal.

But this world's history has never been
An object-lesson of the world's ideals:
From ancient times till now, the fiercest strife
Has been 'tween good and evil in the hearts
Of individuals and nations all.

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

Apollyon's evil energy of woe
Fore'er incites the weak to think and do
The things that justly to destruction lead;
Far more! all ill is masked with promised
good:—

"All this I give thee, if thou worship me;
You and your fellow-man are more than you:
One only shall survive; your neighbor gone
Will leave two men's possessions, possible
And actual, all enjoyed by you alone:
Crush him, and thou shalt live." But heroes
shun

That self-enthronement doctrine which invites
Vain men to fair mirages, pleasure-strewn
And even masked with highest happiness,
Where eager fools can find their miry grave;
Morality supreme is sin destroyed.

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

Some peaceless breasts embody martial souls,—
Great ruffians, pompous more with pride than
hate,

Who glory in the thought of victory ;
Ambitious warriors hope to find their ease
By way of carnage, blood-strewn battle-fields,
And horrid heaps of murdered men's débris ;
Napoleon could bridge the chasms with men :
Alive or dead, his men were implements
Of fame : his fortune's-way was paved with men.

What is true glory ? Can it be obtained
By marching boldly to the cannon's mouth ?
'Twere folly thus to throw man's life away ;
In skillful soldiery, a strategy
Replaces reckless courage spent in vain :
'Tis but the snare for unsuspecting men.

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

Each soldier brave, in foolish search of fame
And glory, strives for honors false and reaps
The just oblivion of his name and deeds;
What if the warrior's fame is handed down
Through history to all posterity?
'Tis but the lengthened cry of blood to heaven;
The Infinite shall end all martial fame
By blotting out the memory of war
In some great century of future time.

True courage is not bought with hostile blood:
For warriors' courage has a finite strength,
Too soon in helplessness stretcht out by fate;
True courage is a heaven-inspirèd flame,
Triumphant o'er the obstacles of life:
True life, consumed for friends, 'lives evermore.

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

In recent times, curst war, pursued by love
And mercy, partly hides its hideousness
'Neath deeds of kindness saving lives from
doom:

What incongruity! to try to kill
Your enemies, then nurse them back to life!
To wound by force, then heal, is vital waste.
Can right be recognized by swooning men?
Can wrong be righted by the down-struck arm?
Can sympathy revive exploded hearts?

Far better were the trumpet-blasts of war,
The martial music and the soldier's boast,
O'erwhelmed in grateful jubilees of peace;
Far rather should the courage of the great,
Inspirèd by sublimity, march forth
O'er seas of wickedness to calm the waves.

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

"That old Deceiver goes to every land
To gather men to arms, and fatal wars
Consume the multitudes who are deceived:
The time shall come when human war shall cease,
And that Deceiver shall be burned with fire.

"Now blessed are the men of peace: they shall
Be sons of God; and they that overcome
All sin, shall have the fruit of endless life,
The hidden manna and the morning-star;
They shall be clothed in white, as pillars strong
Within My temple; ever in My throne,
They shall be marked with My own signature."—

So in the rainbow round th' eternal throne,
Dark Time was clarified by flaming Light,—
Th' omniscient King of kings and Lord of lords.

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

PHILOSOPHICAL POEMS

Some rejected, self-deceived,—
Some suspected, some believed,—
The great Perceiver unperceived.

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

HEATHEN FATALISM

Creative gods have fashion'd man
In infinite variety:
The changes of creative plan
Can never find satiety.

The gods have written human lives
With trillion different flourishes:
Predestinating gods' archives
Prescribe what each life cherishes.

They cause the human frame to move,
To think, to speak, to act, to feel:
They let the fetter'd giant prove
His innate powers for woe and weal.

Let men collide, resolve and dare,
Imagine, struggle, wish and hope:
E'en though men's lives be full of care,
In manacles they're made to grope.

Ambition's fires shall heat mankind,
And urge to independent life;
But soon, extinction's fiat sign'd,
The gods' erasures end the strife.

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

REVELATIONS TO THE ANCIENTS

When slumbers eased the soul of th' ancient sage,

A portent of profound significance
O'erswept the visions of his quietude:—
In mute procession from the by-gone days
Into the present, marched a gloomy train
Of unforgotten spirits of the Past:
Among them was a friend of greatest worth—
Once mirthful and a blessing to behold—
Now undergoing metamorphosis
To pale unsightliness emaciate,
And quickly to recumbence stricken low,—
A pallid corpse borne mournfully along
In strange funereal suggestiveness.—

The vision passed in lonesome vanishment
Into the Vague whence all forewarnings come.

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

The sleeper wakes surprised, but falls asleep
And has a second dream, contrasting light
With former darkness,—sorrow turned to joy.—
The same dear friend, who formerly seemed
dead,

Seems now transplanted into perfect life
And beauty gloriously radiant,
Revealing loveliness and joy divine.

Now from the happy features of this friend,
Encouragement is smiling cheer and hope:
“Go forth! perform the tasks assigned to thee
By Providence, and shun the powers of ill;
Intrench thy soul on Truth’s eternal rock,
And conquer all the enemies of life.”

So in the lands of darkness and of death,
Archangels whispered immortality.

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

PHILOSOPHY OF MARRIAGE

The facts of marriage have a final cause:
Near-sighted men see mere impelling love
And fascinating charms; their sight is false,
Unable to perceive the distant truth:
Though instincts radical pervade mankind,
They're not essential to the final cause.

Since man and woman constantly approach
Oblivion and ruin sarcophagal,
The sum of instinct-govern'd human lives
Would be but naught,—evaporated blots
Dropt from the careless pen of Destiny.

The married life of numerous ancient kings
Was strangely dark and rarely worth the name;
For altruism and kind beneficence
Were oft replaced by royal selfishness:
So royal marriage, filled with vanity,
Made king and queen both useless to the world.

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

The basis of true marriage is divine:
Souls joined to souls in mutual helpfulness
And blessing, ne'er by finite cares engulfed,
Can have foreknowledge of eternal joy
To be attained,—not in the houris' hell,
But in the sacred angels' Paradise.

If two lives, truly beautiful, unite
In blessed concord, pure, intelligent,—
Which no appearance, falsehood, nor e'en death
Can e'er dissolve,—their spirit-energies
Can harmonize with Resurrecting-Will
That fills them with imperishable joy.

So marriage is the prelude on the stage
Of higher life,—prophetic of more joy,
Realities eternal to be known,
And never-ending lovely harmony
In perfect life beyond the transient tomb.

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

THE TRANSFORMING WILL

All suns of dazzling beam in distant gleam,
All asteroids and moons in glimmering dream,
Rotate and whirl through space ;
The lightning's sudden flash and thunder-crash,
And every stream swell'd by the shower-splash,
Have no fix'd dwelling-place ;
The heat that pierces e'en the vaulted screen,
To stimulate botanic growth unseen,
Builds all th' organic race.

All lightning, heat, light, actinism vibrate ;
All atoms, orbs, streams, plants, must gravitate ;
All forms that grow, feed all that live or go :
These feed each other, building forms that know ;
So acts the Will that forms the cosmic state.

Th' uncausèd Cause of nature's laws
Moves all, and e'er together draws
The dust of forms, both great and small ;
Vibrating through the boundless deep,—
Expanding seeds to forms that reap,—
Awakening life from final sleep,—
Transforming Will is all in all.

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

AN AGNOSTIC'S DESPAIR

Man must ever toil in vain
Till another slave is slain:
Sing for him your final mass.
His time he wastes till he is grown;
His prime he wastes to make it known;
His heart embitter'd, let him pass.

Thrice has this world exiled him;
Thrice another world's frowns grim
Crush him into nothingness.
Beauty beckons him, Come home;
Duty forces him to roam:
Opposing pulls his life oppress.

No comfort anywhere exists:
The wretch forever then persists
To seek some,—what he cannot tell.
Something urges on: where is the goal?
What the aim, and why the striving soul?
Unknowable till spirit bursts its shell.

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

NECESSARY DISCONTENT

Hail, thou Discontentment vast!
Urge thou on the striving soul
From the halfness of the past
Toward some majestic whole.

Not by an easy life,
Nor by a painless strife,
Can we succeed to attain the divine;
Not heedless slavery
Nor careless liberty,
Fit us to build an acceptable shrine.

Many a seeming good
Is but a charming hood,
Luring the ignorant on to their doom:
Only the truly wise
Out of their errors rise
Ere all the light be obscured by the gloom.

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

Wake from your miseries;
Rouse all your energies;
Rise from the grave of a satisfied soul:
 No transient happiness,
 Deck'd with a gorgeous dress,
Can e'er retrieve final loss of life's Goal.

Lost in the wilderness,
Parch'd in the fountainless,
How canst thou now be at ease on the sand?
 Tost on the stormy sea
 On through eternity,
How shall the soul ever reach calmer land?

Far from the trackless waste,
On to the sure way haste:
Haste ere the labyrinth close round thy
 course;
 Toward the holy place
 Ever direct thy race,
Till all thy soul be engaged to thy Source.

Up then to higher home
Where souls no longer roam,
Joyfully soar thou above all distress:
 Upward for evermore
 To Him whom gods adore;
Seek thou the Infinite for happiness.

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

PHENOMENOLOGY OF LIFE

From Lethe's nescience into knowledge flown,
Each human soul is call'd to light and sound:
To interest each in more than lifeless ground,
A picture-world cerulean-domed is shown;
On nature's canvas, beauty decks all zones;
All nature is most musically sway'd;
A world of harmonies divinely made,
Shall point us upward to celestial tones.

By these phenomena each soul is taught
To look through spectacles called Space and
Time:

The present things are here and now, to accord
Perceptibly with what shall yet be sought;
Our transient Now and finite Here must chime
Some echoes of th' eternal, changeless Lord.

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

THE SEARCHER FOR REALITY

He looks into infinitude,
To pierce the veil that hides what *is*:
Although his theories are crude,
He hopes to find realities;
He knows that righteous deeds fulfill
Some purpose of th' Eternal Will.

Though infants' forms still helpless lie,
Deny you that their forms exist?
So infants' minds, still dormant, hie
From Lethe into earthly mist;
So infants' souls unseen arise
From Spirit-land in hurian guise.

So patriarchal infancy
Returns to Spirit-land at last:
The searcher for Reality
Must find his future in his past:
Not having seen, if he believe,
His future shall the loss retrieve.

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

Hast lived for half a century
And gain'd experience patiently,—
Exploring regions once unknown,
But soon expanded and outgrown?
Still art thou but a child at play
Within the twilight ere the Day:
Before the Sun of Truth can rise,
His brilliance closes mortal eyes.

Each soul that's positive, e'er draws
Her nourishment from Highest Cause:
So feeding on the Truth, she grows
Until she understands and knows;
And mellow'd by the beams of Love,
She craves the Force that draws above:
Th' Attractive Centrum draws the soul,
Ascending Heavenward to the Goal.

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

THE DUTY OF MAN

Play well thy part in th' universe,
In thy particular time and place:
Thy little spots must intersperse
Vast volumes of the cosmic space.

Use well resources,—energy
And time and everything thou hast;
Root out each cause of tragedy
By ever rising from the past.

If human personality has fled
And germs of immortality seem dead,—
Dispel the mist that hides the truth from thee,
And make thy future bright with certainty.

Though men may grope in dark despair,
Illumèd Hope shall shine fore'er.
How little slaves know of the free,—
The Truth wrapt in eternity!
Strive thou to find that verity,
And th' occult world that is to be.

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

Art thou pull'd down by ignorance?
Do thy wings beat the void in vain?
From error's helpless slough advance,
And rise above the miry plain.

Where'er you look, behold the rare:
For God has planted flowers there;
And if the weeds be rank and tall,
Do all you can to make them fall.

Love not thy life: it is not thine;
Other lives are much distress'd:
While many mortals grieve and pine,
Rule thyself and cheer the rest.

Impress the world with good, and fight all ill;
Help all your fellow-men the most you can;
Improve yourself in strength and righteous will
And useful deeds: build up the perfect man.

E'er valid life
Joins peace and strife
In triumphant trinity:
E'er, soon or late,
Love conquers hate,—
Building our divinity.

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

THE FAREWELL OF AGONISTES

What man has lived the utmost in his pow'r?
Whose light has brighten'd all the gloomy souls?
What man has done his duty every hour?
His name cannot be found on human rolls.

E'en though man strive beyond his finite
strength,
What life has overgrown all transiencies?
No human life, until the soul at length
Transcends the present world's formalities.

When individual human parts are play'd,
A larger life is open to the soul:
Thenceforth the soul expanded, is remade
A worthy part of one great perfect Whole:

Unvex'd by any finite attribute,
Good Will shall conquer when the voice is mute.

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

TOIL AND GENIUS

No genius ever rose above the soil
Without intense, effective, constant toil.

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

NAPOLEONIC AMBITION

A supernatural egoism,
In meteoric splendor view'd,
Impell'd me from th' obscure abyssm
To rise into infinitude:

As friendly warnings often came,
To shun the threatening hand of Fate,—
Apollo's arrow took its aim,
But Love divine forbade its hate.

Ambition, upward urge me still
And raise my buskins high fo: me,
Until I look above life's hill
With awful neural majesty:

Exalt me far above the strife
Of comedy and tragedy;
Exalt me to the higher Life,—
To visions of all mystery.

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

EXPERIENCES OF A TOILER

Who only lives to toil and drudge, lives not.
To be scourged with restless and unceasing pangs
For better things than curst ambition gives,
Is pain. Where is the promised rest, remote
From things attainable, and when the joy?
They're here and now; but, blind to circum-
stance,
A slave projects them on and ever on,
Till he be more invisible than they.

Shall mock ideals lure the slave to peace
That is not peace, and offer a mirage
To wearied, thirsting souls? Nay, nay! advance,
And seek reality where life is real:
There shall the blind eyes see, the deaf ears hear,
And none but kind hearts beat, in harmony
With all the good in this old universe.

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

The victor's palm shall not be given to him
Who toiled the most, but vainly, and contemned
The natural economy of life:
For him no blessed vision shall unfold,
No angel smooth his cares and gently calm
His fevered strivings after nullities;
His only be the crown who willed the best.

Remember ye the gloom in blasted life:
While Wealth and Beauty lived in pleasant ease,
A toilsome genius bravely met grim Death.—
So he who immaturely leaves the stage
Without a murmur, must impress the world
With whisp'rings of immensity unlived,
And light his storm-cloud with the sunset rays
Portending strife outgrown and future weal.

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

THE TOIL OF MOZART

Now sound one trumpet-note for that great soul
Who burned the wires of life incessantly,—
The most intense of toilers—grave unknown—
In Requiem eternal wrought to sleep,—
Johann Chrysostom Wolfgang A. Mozart.

Ye scholars, toil! forever toil, until
The very air be filled with tragedy
And premonitions of consummate woe:
E'en then cease not to toil. Who with his
thoughts

Too easily a massive structure builds,
Admired for strength and everlasting hope,
Has hardly learned to toil; and he who toils
Until the life-strings tremble and vibrate
In sympathy with ultra-sensuous Truth,
Has but begun to toil. But what if life
Grow faint, and silver cords be loosed, and all
The vision of success be quite consumed
In final brilliance ere perpetual night?

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

Not will the world deplore a toiler's death,
Commiserate his rocket-life, and long
For more enduring light; it only scorns
The vain attempts of energy misspent.

Not in the words of sland'rous Fame—though
 writ
On scroll, or wrought on stone—can toilers be
Immortal, but where Ignorance ne'er read
Nor Falsehood wrote,—in Heaven's own
register.

No sepulcher nor world-destroying fire
Can harm that supermundane angel-choir,
Where majesty ascends on ether-wings:
Transforming death to music, Mozart sings.

L. OFC.

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

THE TRIUMPH OF GENIUS

Wenn das heilig' Erworbene
Der Seher deutlich sieht,
Alles eitle Verdorbene
Eilt hinweg und flieht.

Wenn der Strom erhaben fliest
In das Meer der Ewigkeit,
Ewiglich er Einfluss giesst
In die grössten Quellen der Zeit.

When the holy acquisition
The seer can clearly see,
All the vain things of perdition
Haste away and flee.

When the stream of life sublime
Enters that eternal sea,
Influx flows perpetually
To the greatest springs of time.

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

SILENCE

Deep Silence speaks the highest human word,—
Th' unutterable utterance of life;
With fast vibrations that can not be heard,
It eulogizes human pain and strife.

That unexplored vibration-realm contains
Great energies by us not heard nor seen:
The spirits are at home where Silence reigns,
And know the royal Will by senses keen.

So genius tells the world of patient toil
Too great for mortal bodies to endure;
So Mozart sings, though buried in the soil,
That Requiem,—of transient ills the cure;

So mighty voices, when their sound has fled,
Make musical the silence of the dead.

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

THE DRAMA OF THE INFINITE

*An allegorical prose-poem
on the relation of human beings to the
universe and to eternity.*

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

There is a DRAMATIST SUPREME whose
name
Is Endless Being and Reality:
His masterpiece is called Infinitude;
His stage, the Universe; the action has
A vast duration, all Eternity;
Innumerable His actors who are called
Th' Immortal Throng. For operatic room,
THE DRAMATIST has built a transient
World,
Inviting countless beings to observe
The product of Sublime Omnipotence.

Spectators entered, one by one, to see
The sights unseen and hear the sounds unheard;
But many did not know that Dramas Great
Were there invisible; though some had heard
That Scenes should there unfold, yet when would
these
Be heralded by curtains just removed?
For eighty years some looked upon the Screen,
And wearily found nothing but a sleep.

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

Then others querulously mourned and said:
"None ever saw these Scenes; they are a myth
Whose non-performance only fools await.
Let's make and act some dramas of our own."
What dramas then were made, and how per-
formed!

For strife and hatred were objectified,
And scorn and envy were entombed in woe.
These dramas fiercely raced with human rage,
But ended; and their actors fell asleep.

A few hoped on and faithfully observed:
"When shall the Screen ascend that we may see
The Great Unseen?" Sometimes their vision
cleared,
That they could permeate the Screen and get
Surprising glimpses of Reality.
When Evening came to close their Vigil-Day,
Their drowsy senses, gently soothed to sleep
By music echoed from the Veiled Throng,
Perceived reflected lights of Morning's Dawn.

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

Eternity rotates the sphere of Time
Through every second of its longitude;
Its arc complete, the Sleepless DRAMATIST
Sends Heralds to arouse the sleeping throng;
The Heralds blow their clarions o'er the World:
"Awake! behold Unknown Infinitude!
The Prelude is all o'er; for mortals act
The Prelude as they choose; the actors all
Shall now arise to know the Great Unknown."

The sleepers all awake; the Screen ascends;
The rainbow-stars light up the Endless Stage;
The Orchestras of total symphony
Sound forth Perfection's joyous harmony;
The Throng Immortal, clothed in Radiance,
Sing carols fresh for all Eternity:—
"O who can comprehend Infinitude?
THE INFINITE alone; then worship Him."

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

What Scenes for strange spectators roused from
sleep!

Those actors of the finite tragedy,
Enthroning Hate and Unbelief, are now
Astounded by the contrast of Good Will:
The magnitude of Light and Sound, too great
For unadapted eyes and ears to bear,
Now makes them blind and deaf for evermore.

But they who vigilantly strove to find
Eternal Things by looking through the Screen,
Now have their fresh-awakened senses strong,
Perceiving and enjoying Endless Scenes
Of Being and Reality revealed;
Spontaneously they sing a song of praise:—

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

ALL-FATHER, hail! In cosmic splendors
veil'd,
Thy Dignity Enthronèd moves the worlds;
'Mid brilliant astral coronals of flame,
Effulgence of chromatic radiance,
And fulness of transcendent harmony,
Thy Majesty o'er-rules all destiny.
With holy fear, ineffably profound,
We humble creatures e'er adore Thy Name:
Though faintly sound the echoes of our praise,
Their weak vibrations reach THE FATHER.
HEART.

PICTURE GALLERY OF SOULS

EPILOGUE ON IMMORTALITY

Alternating gleams and gloom,
Life's an arc-light in a room:
Currents from th' energetic store
Luminous vibrations bore—
Brighten'd—waver'd—darken'd o'er.—
Currents *new* will shine far more.

Though evening knells of life be toll'd
And fairest bodies change to mould,
Rich minds live in th' eternal Fold:
Till everlasting stars grow old
And everburning suns grow cold,—
Sing to your Lord, ye souls of gold.

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